

# IMAGO DEI

## On Race, Racism, and the Gospel

1. God created all human beings in His image. Therefore, every image-bearer possesses equal dignity and worth in the eyes of God. (*Genesis 1:26-30; Genesis 9:6; Luke 12:4-7; John 3:16-17; Acts 10:34-35; Acts 17:26; Romans 5:6-8; Colossians 3:9-11*)
2. Racism is a sin. Unpacking that a little more: racism – individual and personal hatred toward a race perceived to be inferior or passive attitudes toward societal structures that burden a particular race – is a result of the fall. (*Deuteronomy 10:17-18; John 7:24; Acts 10:9-16, 34-43; Philippians 2:1-11; James 2:1-13; James 3:1-12*)
3. Sins do not go extinct, therefore ethnicity-based oppression, which has been clearly seen both in biblical history as well as U.S. history, is still with us, in one form or another. Wherever sin strongholds exist, the Church must, through example, prayer, work, and witness, pull them down in the power of the Holy Spirit. (*Leviticus 26:36-42; Ezra 9:6-16; Nehemiah 9: 1-37; Psalm 106:6; Isaiah 1:17; Isaiah 65:6-7; Jeremiah 3:24-25; Jeremiah 14:19-22; Micah 6:8; Acts 7:39-53; 1 John 3:4-6*)
4. Jesus died to bring male/female, slave/free, Jew/Gentile into one family, having destroyed the walls of hostility which divide humans in every culture. (*1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Galatians 3:27-29; Ephesians 2:11-22; Colossians 3:11-17; 1 Peter 3:8-12*)
5. The Church is to be an eschatological community, previewing the gloriously diverse community that will gather for praise around Christ's throne in the new heavens and new earth. (*Psalm 67:4; Jeremiah 38:1-39:18; Acts 8:1-40; Romans 4:1-25; 1 Corinthians 12:12-26; Galatians 3:1-4:31; Ephesians 1:7-10; Ephesians 3:8-12; Ephesians 4:1-16; Revelation 5:8-10; Revelation 7:9-10; Revelation 10:11; Revelation 14:6-7*)
6. The task of the Great Commission – the Church's chief assignment – is aimed at gathering God's blood-bought, male-and-female, multi-ethnic community. The accomplishment of this God-given assignment necessitates the coordinated efforts of God's male-and-female, multi-ethnic community. (*Genesis 12:1-3; Matthew 28:16-20; John 17:21-22; Acts 2:5-11; 1 Corinthians 12:1-13:13; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Ephesians 3:8-12*)
7. The multi-ethnic community which the Church is – by God's design – does not immediately suggest that every local church in every place will display the same diversity in its fellowship, worship, or leadership. That said, the church will pray and actively seek to increase the display of God's multi-faceted glory through a diverse membership and leadership. (*Acts 6:1-7; Acts 10:9-16, 34-43; Acts 13:1-2; Ephesians 2:11-22*)
8. The Church is not beholden to politics. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world. The Church's citizenship is in heaven, therefore when it confronts sin, it must do so without a view to political gains or losses. (*Joshua 24:14-15; Psalm 33:12; Psalm 94:20-23; Psalm 146:3-4; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 16:24-26; Matthew 22:15-22; John 15:18-25; John 17:3-19; Acts 5:29-32; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Philippians 3:20; Titus 3:9-11; James 4:4; 1 Peter 2:11-17; 1 John 2:15-17*)
9. Given God's heart and God's plan for His redeemed community from every nation, followers of Jesus will confront the sins of personal racism, but will also – peacefully, lawfully, and within the bounds of our gospel distinctiveness – work to address societal structures that perpetuate inequality. (*Deuteronomy 10:17-22; Deuteronomy 15:7-11; 2 Chronicles 7:13-14; Isaiah 55:6-7; Jeremiah 29:4-28; Lamentations 3:40; Micah 6:8; Luke 19:1-10; James 1:27; James 2:1-13*)
10. The remedies the Church brings to bear on the sin of racism, like every other issue, must be gospel-infused remedies, manifestly anchored to the inerrant and sufficient Word of God. Here again, our primary impulse as a church is "We Abide Biblically." (*1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 119:1-176; Isaiah 40:8; John 8:31-32; John 15:1-17; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:13-21; 2 John 6-11*)